Islam and Other Faiths

هو الذی ارسل رسوله بالهدی و دین الحق لیظهره
علی الدین کله و لو کره المشرکون

Islam and Other Faiths

BY

HAZRAT MIRZA BASHIR-UD-DIN MAHMUD AHMAD,

Second Successor of the Promised Messiah.

TRANSLATED FROM URDU BY

QAZI ABDUL HAQUE,

and reproduced from the "Review of Religions," for April and May, 1916.

PUBLISHED BY

THE ANJUMAN TARAQQI-I-ISLAN,

Qadian, Punjab, India.

Lahore:

Printed at the "Artistic Printing Works."

A New English Translation of the Holy Quran.

The Anjuman-Taraqqi Islam, Qadian, Punjab, India, has undertaken to publish an authentic English Translation with copious Explanatory notes, etc. The Anjuman has appointed for this purpose a board of translators thoroughly versed in Western learning and highly proficient in Islamic Theology. It proposes to bring out this translation in thirty regular instalments, one following the other as soon as possible, so that the anxious public may not be kept long in suspense. The first instalment is already out. Some idea of the special features of this Translation may be had from the specimen pages which may be supplied on application. The uppermost space in every page is consecrated to the Arabic text written in a bold and beautiful hand. Below it, there is the transliteration of the same, lower down in order comes the English rendering, the explanatory notes, a running note on the arrangement of the verses, and finally the cross references. Every part published will have an Index at the end, and when the translation of the whole Quran is complete. the whole volume will be brought out with an ample Introduction dealing with all the important problems concerning the Holy Quran, and rules and suggestions for the easy grasp of the same. The price of each part, full rexine bound, superior paper, is Rs. 10 (or 14*s*), full Morocco bound, Rs. 15 (or 1 £) ; ordinary paper, paper cover, Rs. 2 (or 3*s* 6*d*). Intending subscribers are requested to send their orders to the Secretary, Anjuman-Taraqqi Islam, Qadian Punjab, India, or to Qazi Abdullah, B.A., B.T., Ahmadiyya Missionary, 62, Lady Margaret Road, London, N. W.

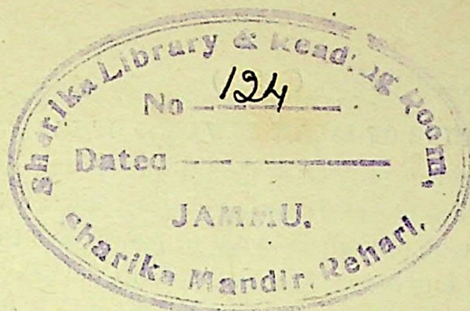
Space does not permit of the publication of all the opinions which we have received up to this time and which are unanimous in declaring the Translation to be unique in character. We can find space only for a few of them.—

Mr. S. Abdul Latif. Deputy Magistrate, Sub-Divisional Officer of Pirojpur (Bakergunj), Bengal, writes :—" It is very beautifully printed. The explanatory notes are excellent and most illuminating."

Mr. M. H. P. Ghatatah, Personal Assistant to the Dewan, Hyderabad Deccan, Member of the New York Institute of Science, &c , says :—

" As regards the work itself my opinion is that it is the most welcome addition to Indian Ethical Literature uniquely surpassing and outweighing all the works on Islam. The English translation is most simple and easily conceivable. The printing is exquisitely beautiful, the whole work fascinatingly attractive. There are treasures of spiritual thoughts and ideas for reflection. The work partakes of all kinds of knowledge, literature, history, biography, religion, ethics, theosophy, philosophy, besides divine and spiritual inspiration. Volumes can be written in praise of this singular work, which can be very well classed under miracles."

Mr. Siraj-ud-Din Ahmad of Chhatarpur State, after enumerating the various excellences of this book, sums up his opinion with the following words :—" I have never come across such a commentary of the Holy Quran in Arabic, Persian or Urdu. It is impossible to write such a book without heavenly aid."



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
نحمده و نصلی علی رسوله الکریم

Islam and Other Faiths.*

By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Second Successor of the Promised Messiah.

Before I take up the subject proper, I would thank God for His so graciously endowing us with powers and faculties which enable us to ponder over all sorts of subtle and delicate problems and which lead us to that Supreme Being who is the Creator, the Sustainer and the Master of the whole universe. I thank the Almighty who, with all His unbounded powers and perfect purity, condescended to care for the guidance of this weak and frail being—man, and vouchsafed to him such faculties and knowledge as enable him to tide over all the impediments and get over all the obstacles that beset his way to his Lord and Master, and thus attain nearness to Him. I thank Him again because finding man weak, He came to his help and chose out of the human species individuals who heard His blessed voice and thus built faith on the bed-rock of personal observation. He granted these chosen people mighty signs which serve to strengthen the faith of those who hanker after truth. I thank Him once again for granting us a Government under whose fostering care we can freely exchange views in matters religious and can without fear and molestation, convey the result of our investigations to others.

---

*Translated from Urdu by Qazi Abdul Haq.

THE ATTITUDE OF ISLAM TOWARDS OTHER FAITHS.

After this brief preface. I should like to say at the very outset that by comparing Islam with other faiths it is far from my object to stoop to the low tactic of pointing to the falsity of other faiths by hurling certain imputations against them and thereby attempt to show that Islam is the only faith sent for the guidance of man. Such a course is not only abhorrent to the common sense of man but also positively contrary to the whole tenor of Islam, which does not look upon God as unjust and therefore repudiates the idea that God made no provisions for the guidance of mankind before the appearance of the Holy Prophet of Arabia. If God has been, since the creation of the world, providing for the physical requirements of man, there is certainly no reason to believe that He failed to look to the spiritual needs of the human race, and allowed them to grope in darkness for thousands of years Islam is quite opposed to such a view and holds God as the Lord of the whole universe, whose support and sustenance is not confined to any particular period or locality. His spiritual light has ever illumined the commonsense just as His sun has ever shed light over the physical world, and the shower of revelation has ever been fertilising the spiritual soil just as the rain-water descends to give fecundity to the physical soil. God has not deprived any nation of His favours. He was not parsimonious towards India or Persia, nor did He withhold His favour from China, Arabia, or other parts of Asia. Europe and America too were not neglected. Even the dark Continent of Africa was not excepted. In short, the Holy Quran declares with full force, وان من أمة الا خلا فيها نذير "No nation has passed to which God has not sent a prophet." (XXXV, 22.) Similarly He says:— ولقد بعثنا فی کل امة رسولا ان اعبدو االله واجتنبوا الطاغوت "We sent prophets to every nation with the clear message 'Worship Allah and steer clear of *Taghut*.*'" (XVI, 38.) Besides this, the Holy Prophet said that some prophets were raised in India as well. When questioned about Persia he is reported to have replied that the Persian language too had not been an

* *Lit.* one who transgresses or revolts. The name is generally applied to the Devil. Ed., R. R.

exception and that Divine revelation had been sent in that language too.

Under these circumstances if, to give a comparative view of other faiths and Islam, I pretend to say that the only faith sent for the guidance of mankind since the beginning of the world is the one revealed to the Holy Prophet of Arabia, I will surely be making a wild statement which runs counter to the true spirit of Islam. So in this comparison my position is quite different from that of the adherents of other faiths who are ever driven to falsify the prophets of other nationalities in order to prove the truth of their own prophets. To demonstrate the truth of the greatest Prophet, among whose humble servants I have the pride and the honour to reckon myself, I am, quite unlike others, bound to bear witness to the truth of all the prophets who appeared in different lands. An Araya Samajist finds the position of the *rishis* who first chanted the Holy Vedas intact only as long as the whole world is held absolutely destitute of the righteous servants of God; and thus to prove the truth of his own faith, he is constrained to deny the truth of all the godly personages who appeared at different times in diverse places for the regeneration of the world. A Christian or a Jew cannot find himself able to adhere to the truth of his own scriptures unless he declares all those books which were revealed for the guidance of the people outside Syria to be false, and thus to support his own faith he sees it necessary to make a wholesale denunciation of other faiths. Similarly, a Zoroastrian considers it highly antagonistic to the interests of his own faith to believe in the existence of any revealed book or a prophet outside the boundaries o Persia, and thus regards all outlandish scriptures and prophets as false.

In short, all religions except Islam become alarmed when archaeological research unfolds the claim of a certain individual to prophethood in any country in the past, or when historical investigation brings to light a certain scripture. They are startled as if they had been confronted with a fresh formidable

foe. But on the other hand, whenever a Muslim comes to hear of any prophet in any part of the world, his heart leaps with joy, because he finds in it a fresh testimony to the words of the Holy Quran وان من امة الا خلا فيها نذير *having come true. The greater the number of prophets and revealed books is proved to be in different parts of the wide earth, so much the stronger becomes the claim of the Holy Quran that every nation has been favoured with the advent of a prophet. Let the existence of any number of new faiths be proved, it will be an additional source of joy for the Muslim.

So, in comparing Islam with other faiths nothing is farthest from my purpose than to call other faiths pure human undertakings and the prophets of the world so many impostors. On the other hand, it is my bounden duty as a Muslim to bear witness to the truth of all the righteous servants of God wherever they had happened to appear, and admit without any reserve or demur the truth of the Indian prophets, Rama and Krishna, quite as readily as that of the Israelite prophets. It is again my business to testify to the truth of the Persian sage, Zoroaster, or any other heavenly personality who claimed to be the recipient of Divine revelation, who was backed up with Divine succour and favour, and for whose acceptance millions of minds were opened by God. We learn from the Holy Quran :— ومن اظلم ممن افترى على الله كذبا "Who can be more cruel and deserving of punishment than the one who speaks lie about God and rehearses false revelation to men, and claims to be sent by God, although he has no connection with Him." (VI, 22). If such a pretender to prophethood can also prosper and succeed in his object, then there remains no difference between the true and the false prophets.

THE NEED FOR ISLAM IN THE PRESENCE OF OTHER RELIGIONS.

Here arises a question. When Islam holds all other faiths

*"There is no people but there has passed among them a Prophet" (XXXV, 22).

as from God, what need is there for it, and why should it be preached to the followers of other faiths which are equally divine? The reply is plain. Although Islam owns that it is not the first religion of the world, and that in pre-Islamic days every nation had been visited by a prophet, yet it holds at the same time that all the pre-Islamic faiths were meant for the limited needs of the different localities for which they were respectively revealed, hence the need for a separate prophet for each different people. This was preparatory to that high stage of development which was yet to follow in the evolution of mankind. In the time of the Holy Prophet of Arabia all faiths were, owing to the remoteness of prophetic period, well-nigh on the brink of spiritual breakdown, and the pure treasure of heavenly knowledge had suffered a great deal from human interference. To this the Holy Quran points when it says:—

ظہر الفساد فی البر و البحر بما کسبت ایدی الناس

i.e., "Both land and water have become corrupt on account of the excesses of men" (XXX ,40). In the language of the Holy Quran, 'dry land' represents human wisdom divorced from Divine revelation, and 'water' stands for the Divine word. So the verse means that the outrages of man had brought about disastrous results. On one side, unbridled appetite had thrown a thick gloom over the comprehension of mankind, and the power of grasp had become stunted on account of the rank growth of passion and desire. Those people who depended on common sense were, on account of their being too much engrossed in worldliness, even unable to reach the stage capable of attainment by means of common sense unaided by other external agencies. Moreover, the word of God had also lost its original purity. Human hand had adulterated the purity of the Divine word by too many selfish interpolations. Thus even those people who depended on revelation for their guidance were left without any means of spiritual help on account of the Divine word having been mixed with human element. When matters had come to such a pass, and an utter spiritual deadlock was the order of the day all the world over, the

Merciful God of the world, of course, took pity on His creatures and did not bear to see them straying away from the path of truth and rectitude.

Really at the time of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him) the case of all the faiths of the world was very much like a number of ropes hanging from the top of a high minaret. People in their endeavour to scrample up to the top got hold of the ropes, and as they approached the top, down they fell and remained dangling in the air by some meagre entanglement of the ropes. Different prophets set their people climbing up to the top of the spiritual tower, which helped to bring the spiritual faculties into play. But as the prophetic age saw a long lull which would have resulted in the total spiritual wreckage but for the timely appearance of the Holy Prophet of Arabia, this saviour of the world came in an opportune moment and saved the dangerously dangling humanity from spiritual destruction, and all those that were struggling to reach the top of the minaret from various directions were seated together on the destined top; and there came one faith and one book for the whole world for all time to come, because civic progress had brought the world to the state of a single city and the whole humanity to the state of one community; and it was the first day when the principle of the brotherhood of man became a practical ordinance in the real sense of the term, and the Holy Prophet announced to the world with all the emphasis at his command :—

يا يها الناس انى رسول الله اليكم جميعا الذى له ملك
السموات والارض لا اله الا هو يحيي ويميت فامنوا بالله و
رسوله النبى الامى الذى يؤمن بالله وكلماته واتبعوه لعلكم تهتدون

" O people, I have been sent to you all a messenger from one God who is the Master of heavens and earth, and there is none other worthy of worship than He Who creates and annihilates. So believe in Him and His prophet who relates unknown things to you from God beforehand, and who is as free from sin as a child not yet separated from the mother, and who not only calls

you to God but himself believes in Him and accepts all His commandments. Follow him so that you may reach Him" (VII, 157). In this verse, God brings home the fact that the prophet of Abrabia is sent as a messenger to the whole world so that God, who is the one God of the whole universe, may be manifested in full glory through one prophet to the whole world, and His oneness may be glorified in a new way. It was impossible that God should have left the world unaided at such a critical time while He is the vivifier and the destroyer. His attribute of vivification demanded that the dead earth might be restored to life and the faiths that had become useless might be consigned to eternal death, and that a single faith might gratify all the needs and requiremeuts of mankind. Such a claim had not been made by any Indian savant or Persian sage, or Syrian prophet, because they came to one country and one people, and if some men had extended the sphere of their faiths over other lands, it had been done quite against the teachings of their founders or after the death of their initiators. Out of all the faiths other than Islam Christianity is the greatest proselytizing religion, but a cursory study of the history of this faith reveals the fact that Jesus prohibited public preaching of the faith, but that after him preaching became universal which cannot be considered as part of the religion. In short, Islam declares that the pre-Islamic faiths have been abrogated for either of the two reasons :— First, because their teachings were meant for limited periods and localities, and the Divine wisdom had designed their replacement by universal teachings. Secondly, because the real teachings of some faiths had become so much defiled that they had lost their original shape and it was therefore difficult for a true seeker after truth to act upon them, for their doubtful accuracy afforded little relief; and although they contained a certain element of truth, yet the hopeless confusion of truth and falsehood rendered it impossible to put positive faith in any one point. To do away with all such misgivings and doubts which are fatal to spiritual progress, God willed the

establishment of a new revelation and new law which might be acted upon without fear and every word of which might be above the possibility of doubt as to its divine origin. One great difference between Islam and other faiths is that of all the religions of the world there is not a single one which possesses its scripture in its established pristine purity, but about the Holy Quran of Islam it can be affirmed on the strongest imaginable authority of historical evidence that it comes down to us in its original form as it was revealed to the Holy Prophet. While following the Holy Quran a Muslim enjoys a degree of satisfaction quite unattained by others It is historically unquestionable that either the previous scriptures are not in their original condition or they have passed through such a long cycle of dark ages that it cannot be said with any amount of certainty that they are in their original form.

WHY DID NOT GOD PROTECT THE PREVIOUS SCRIPTURES?

The objection why God has not protected the previous scriptures is obviously groundless. In old days different nationalities that inhabited the globe were so much apart from each other in respect of distance and civic relationships that one book to all was an impossibility. Besides this, the spiritual needs too were passing through their initial stage. So it was only right that quite in keeping with the requirements of the time separate prophets were sent in different climes, and as these elementary scriptures were of course to be abrogated with every advance in the social progress, it was therefore needless to protect them. Thus we read only about the Holy Quran: انا نحن نزلنا الذكر و انا له لحفظون "We have sent down this book and we alone are its guardian" (XV, 9). In this verse we are given to understand that God has taken upon Himself the care and protection of this Book and that He Himself will keep it from corruption. This feature of the Holy Quran is not shared by any other scripture. If some body undertakes to show me such a claim of divine protection having been put in by any of the other scriptures, I shall be thankful to him. But no other book lays claim to perpetual heavenly protection,

nor could it do so because no book, with the solitary exception of the Holy Quran, has claimed to be a universal and in every respect a perfect book. If, without the indispensable essentials of universality and perfection, some book lay claim to everlasting protection from God, either of the two things will have to be admitted: first, that notwithstanding physical and spiritual unity and social progress of the human race, God has purposely intended to keep nations apart religiously and deprive mankind of the religious union which is the key to all progress; secondly, that although man has made strides socially towards coalescence, yet God has not thought fit to grant him one perfect law, and imperfect and local laws are being needlessly or rather unwisely perpetuated. Neither of the above two views can be accepted with any show of reason. So when the previous scriptures were not intended for the whole world, nor were their teachings comprehensive enough to cover all the varied activities and diversified aspects of human life, it was not at all necessary to preserve them. They were like a temporary camp which need not be protected with the care necessary for solid stable piles. The former is required for a short time after which it becomes useless and need not be preserved. The latter, of course- is required for permanant use and must needs be protected against all adverse influences. In brief, the faith of Islam is the only one whose book claims to be for the whole mankind and for all time to come. It says:—

واوحی الی هذا القرآن لانذرکم به ومن بلغ

" This book has been revealed to me so that I may warn you against the wrath of God by means of it, and also those to whom this Quran may be conveyed " (VI, 20)* That is to say, this book is not saddled with the limitations of time and place. Whoever comes to hear of it is bound to follow it. Similarly, Islam is the only faith whose book has declared; الیوم اکملت لکم دینکم واتممت علیکم نعمتی "This day I have completed My faith

*Similarly elsewhere the Holy Quran says: تبارک الذی نزل الفرقان علی عبده لیکون للعلمین نذیر "Blessed is He Who has sent down the Furqan to His servant that he may be a warner for all the world" (XXV, 2).

for you in all respects, and have filled the measure of My favours" (V, 4). The necessary corollary of these two characteristics is that God will protect it because a book perfect in all respects need not be abrogated. A book meant for all time and all ages cannot but be deservedly preserved.

To sum up the position, Islam holds all religions to be from God but declares at the same time that at the time of the inception of Islam all faiths had lost their original colour and God therefore sent down the Holy Quran, and as the spiritual faculties of man had attained to maturity and the world had also progressed to an extent that free intercourse was possible all the world over, so God vouchsafed to the world a perfect faith which embodied in it the capacity of carrying man through highest possible development; When Islam is compared with other faiths in the light of this principle, we cannot fail to notice that pre-Islamic faiths contained beauties which faded away under the wasting influence of rolling years, or the beauties of these faiths had been selfishly replaced by human insertions or the teachings were good in themselves, but only afforded partial scope for certain faculties and duties of man, to the suppression of other powers, and could not therefore last for ever. This difference between Islam and other faiths has been aptly brought out by the Holy Quran when it says:—

وکذ لک جعلنکم امة وسطا لتکونوا شهداء علی الناس ویکون
الرسول علیکم شهیدا

"Similarly We have made you such a people as adhere to the mean course in their doings and avoid extremes. Their actions maintain such a perfect equilibrium that no aspect is ignored. We have made you so, that ye be a witness for other people and faiths, *i. e.*, just as the evidence of the witness makes the truth manifest, similarly those among you who act upon the Quranic teachings and reap the happy fruit thereof, will be like so many witnesses for other people to the truth and life-giving and wonder-working force of these teachings. They will confess by word of mouth and also bear witness in their actions to the truth of the claims of the Holy Quran, and

other people will, by seeing their pure spiritual life, come to the conclusion that the path of Islam on which they tread is the true path. Further on, it is added that just as the Muslims are as witnesses for other peoples, in the same way the Holy Prophet is a witness for this class who become convinced of the truth of Islam by observing the pure life of the Holy Prophet" (II, 144). In a word, the Holy Quran claims to be free from extremes and inculcates such teachings as follow the middle line and are therefore useful for all people and all places and for all time to come.

Although the Holy Quran possesses numberless beauties and the traditions also explain them quite vividly, yet I shall single out only one out of many, which will go far to show that Islam is the only religion which fulfils all the requirements of man and which does not contain even a single injunction based on a consideration of expediency or temporary need of the hour. So this is the only religion to which searchers for truth must direct all their energies and which they must purchase even at the cost of their lives, because nothing is dearer to a good man than truth.

THE PURPOSE OF RELIGION.

Before making a comparative study of Islam and other faiths in the particular aspect stated above, it is necessary to understand the purpose of religion, so that it may easily be judged which religion has adopted the golden mean in fulfilling that purpose. So according to the Holy Quran the purpose which underlies religion is twofold (1) To discharge one's duties to God, (2) To safeguard the rights of mankind. The other religions are not at variance with Islam in this matter. So in our comparison we shall follow this natural division :—

CONNECTION WITH GOD.

First of all we take up the connection of man with God and see what procedure Islam has adopted to establish a connection between man and God. But before examining the procedure presented for the purpose it will be well for facility

of comprehension to understand what hidden powers of man serve to establish a real connection and which powers prompt him to obey a superior power.

TWO INCENTIVES TO OBEDIENCE

So it must be borne in mind that man contracts a relationship with others under the influence of two instincts: love or fear. All sorts of friendship and connection will be found to take root either in love or fear. Man comes to love a thing and thus likes its company and dislikes its separation. The lover harbours an instinctive love for all that is in any way usefully connected with the beloved. He grows in love till at last his love reaches a stage when pleasure of the beloved becomes second nature with him, and he considers that certain likes and dislikes are ingrained in his very natrue, while really his love or hatred for those things is the reflex of that of the beloved. Similarly, we see that some connections are based on nothing but fear, and when the fear is no more the connection ceases to exist. Some people tame certain voracious animals and it is seen that their connection with those animals is rooted in fear, and therefore they always approach them with some defensive weapon, and it is not seldom that when approached unarmed the animals severely wound, and even kill, their masters. The same is the case with some men of wild disposition. For them love has no force of appeal. Many there are who go the length of hating or rather beating their parents, whom they owe so much, when grown up; and sometimes, merely to take possession of their property, do not hesitate even to poison them. But with all the ferocity of their disposition such wicked rogues assume quite a submissive attitude towards the government. This submissive attitude on their part is only through fear of certain punishment in case of any infringement of law. If the government would make such people loyal and law-abiding by means of love and gentleness only, they would fall away in a day and at once turn against it. In short, an insight into human nature brings to light the fact that there are two incentives to the formation of a connection: Love or fear.

TWO SOURCES OF LOVE.

Similarly, when carefully examined the causes that prompt love resolve themselves into two root incentives:—(1) beauty, (2) beneficence. A man cherishes love for a thing because it takes his fancy, and its beauty appeals to his mind. Beauty, in whatever from it may happen to exist—in appearance, in manners, in knowledge or in common sense—has a powerful attraction for a large majority of men. Man loves well-furnished houses, attractive pictures, green meadows and sweet-scented flowers and several similar things merely because they possess beauty, although they bring him no benefit; on the other hand, they cost him much. Similarly men love beautiful persons; and this beauty, as explained before, may manifest itself in form, manners, wisdom, knowledge and other cognate things.

The second prompting for love is beneficence. The love that exists between the children and the parents is chiefly grounded in that beneficence which the parents exhibit to their children from their birth to their independent stage of life. Again, a servant loves his master or a master loves his servants; and faithfulness, which signifies the connection between the two, is the reciprocal of beneficence and only another name for the latter. Then again love that exists between the wife and the husband is a resultant of a combination of beauty and beneficence. In short, all connections prompted by love are built upon beauty or beneficence. Love found between brothers and sisters also proceeds from the same two causes, because this love takes its rise from the mutual connection of parents and their progeny. The brothers and sisters are linked to a common tie of affection for their parents, and therefore naturally love each other and often fail to comprehend the cause of their love. In a word, love springs either from beauty or beneficence, and the latter again works itself into two ramifications. One is love proceeding from the beneficence received directly from some one, and the other is love which springs from ona's own beneficent

disposition. This is the inherent instinct of love. When we look deeper into human nature, we find that some men are amenable to all the three promptings. There are others again who have for some reason or other lost their susceptibility to one or two of these incentives, and are moved by the influence of either beauty or beneficence or fear and the remaining two have no appealing force for them.

AN INFALLIBLE TEST OF A TRUE RELIGION.

This study of human nature leads us to the inevitable conclusion that only those teachings are from God that seek to establish a connection by appealing to all the three incentives. If a faith lays all the stress on the beauty of the Divine Being and invites man to a love having no corresponding desire for reward or recompense, it surely provides for one kind of disposition, but ignores the other two which would establish connection under the influence of beneficence or fear alone. The latter dispositions finding no remedy for their case in such a faith would become sick of religion, and therefore doomed for ever. In the same way, if a faith emphasises beneficence to the utter disregard of beauty and fear, it also leans to another extreme, and strays from the golden mean, making no provision for those who are capable of connection through love or fear. Similarly if a faith bases itself on nothing but the fear of God and presents God to the world in such a dreadful form that there remains no hope of mercy and forgiveness from Him, then certainly those who are apt to give way to the influence of fear will find satisfaction in this faith, but those accustomed to the wholesome effect of love and beneficence will find no solace in it. The connection which is the result of fear is always short-lived and cannot make one entitled to the favours which are the fruit of love.

Hence it is that a faith that seeks to bring about the regeneration of the world by incessantly shouting "God is love," and makes salvation conditional only on a certain creed, altogether omitting the value of actions, can never suffice for the guidance of the whole mankind. Many there are who, resting

on faith alone, will succumb to their bloody disposition, will never yield to the noble influence of love, and will at last fall away from God like that wretch who revolts against his parents in the face of all their favours and kindnesses. Similarly if a religion holds that God has showered His blessings in full upon one particular nation, to the neglect of all others, it can never be understood to have come for the guidance of the whole human race, because it accuses God of partiality, and thus creates in the mind of man hatred and not love for Him. Again, a faith that presents God as too rigid and vindictive to pardon even a slight shortcoming can not be recognised as divine, however loudly it may testify by word of mouth, to the motherliness or fatherliness of God. When God has created in the minds of men a feeling of compassion for the forgiveness of their offenders, sometimes perpetrators of some real wrong, how can then such a faith as divests God of the noble attribute of mercy be considered to have flown from the Divine fount? Then again, a faith that declares that when deciding upon the salvation of man God keeps behind certain sins and as a punishment for these arrears of sin sends him again to this world cannot be the means of finding connection with God, because such a creed engenders contempt for God, and a spirit of hopelessness is likely to drive men into desperation and therefore sinfulness. In fact, only that religion can be from God that adopts a *via media* in all its injunctions, and on the one hand presenting the beauty of God exacts an attribute of love from man and kindles his affection by reminding him of God's old and new favours; while on the other hand, it compels connection with God by drawing a picture of God's glory and greatness and by creating a sense of contempt for vice.

MEANS ADOPTED BY ISLAM TO BRING ABOUT A TRUE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAN AND GOD.

Such a faith is none other than Islam. The Holy Quran explains all this in the very first chapter which is on the lips of every Muslim :—

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم • الحمد لله رب العالمين الرحمن
الرحيم ملك يوم الدين •

"I begin with the name of Allah the Compassionate, and the Beneficent. He is the sole possessor of all virtues and beauties. All praiseworthy qualities that can in any way extract praise from the human mind centre in Him. He is not only Beautiful, but He is also Beneficent. He is the Lord of all the worlds. He is the Creator of matter and soul, takes care of them while they are apart from each other or combined, and carries them through the different stages of development to perfect their powers and faculties. He is so kind that He not only rewards the service done to Him, but also showers His blessings on man without any sort of service on his part. Upon those who feel thankful to God for His numerous blessings and make a right use of them, He showers His blessings more abundantly and rewards them much in excess of their labours. He is the Master of the day of Judgment, which means that He is not only beautiful and beneficent but He also takes an account of man's deeds at an appointed hour, and with the authority of the Master rewards the virtuous and punishes the guilty both here as well as hereafter. In the word "Master" reference is made to the fact that His reward is also great and His punishment is also severe, because it is easy to escape the punishment of one who is not the master, just as one can easily escape a king's punishment by death or suicide. But God says that He is the Master and it is not at all possible to escape His punishment. So failing other means an appeal is made to the passion of fear. So God continues :— ایاک نعبد "Thee alone do we worship" When a man ponders over the above mentioned attributes of God, whatever disposition and bent of mind he might happen to possess, be he susceptible to the influence of beauty, beneficence or fear,—he can find suitable remedy for him in this chapter and involuntarily bursts into saying :—"O God, I obey Thee. When Thou possessest all those attributes that create love and affection, then with whom can I establish connection except Thyself?" In these words it is also told that when a man establishes a firm connection with God, he yields to the influences of both fear and love of God and in future allows no partner in his love or fear. If he loves

anything, it is for God, and if he fears anything, it is also for God. So when a man reflects over these perfect attributes, love and fear of God so much overpower him that he comes to regard himself as no body before God; and to express this state of mind he adds: وایاک نستعین "And of Thee alone do we ask help," *i. e.*, Keeping in mind Thy beauty, beneficence and glory, it is not possible for us to trust that our ownselves are able to properly fulfil those requirements of love and fear which are necessary for a connection with Thee. So we implore help from Thee so that we may be strengthened for the maintenance of this connection of love. In short, in these few words such a vivid and clear picture is drawn of the beauty, beneficence and glory of God that there is none who cannot submit to its overpowering influence. Whenever a man ponders over the attributes of God in the light of these verses, his mind is compelled to establish connection with Him.

HOW FEAR IS TRANSFORMED INTO LOVE.

It may be mentioned here by the by that although fear is considered to be a means of establishing a connection, yet it is by no means a very high motive, because the connection which is the result of fear is not real. But it is, at the same time equally true that some dispositions are sensible to no influence but fear. So connection by means of fear is only a preliminary step. For instance, when a truant boy does not feel inclined to attend school regularly by love and gentle remonstrations, the parents are compelled to use harsh measures and this makes him regular. The regularity of the truant lad commences at the point of the rod and through fear, but by and by through the kind treatment of the teacher, the forced attendance becomes a willing act of habit and pleasure, and the primitive fear becomes converted into attachment and the evil consequences of education through fear disappear. Although for the guidance of the world, especially those men who, on account of certain weaknesses, have lost all receptivity for guidance except through the avenue of fear, the Holy Quran has reminded man of His Majesty and Lordship, yet it is said ورحمتی

ورحمتی وسعت کل شیئ "My mercy encompasseth all things" (VII, 57). This verse read along with those explained above leaves no room for doubt that fear is a preliminary measure and when through fear some body approaches God, He throws the door of His mercy so wide open to him and pours His blessings so abundantly upon him that the fear is transformed into the strongest possible affection and love, and the man feels the influence of God's grace and beauty operating upon his mind which at last is saturated with love. Thus man turns to God with fear and the receiving grace of God reflects such smiling rays of love upon his mind that he falls at the divine threshold plunged over head and ears in love, and the only fear that harasses him is that the divine Beloved may not get angry at any undesirable act of his and thus send him away from His presence.

THE MEASURES ADOPTED BY ISLAM FIND NO PARALLEL IN OTHER FAITHS.

This sets forth the plan prescribed by Islam to establish and strengthen a connection between man and God, and it is easy to see how the plan follows the golden mean in strict conformity with all those incentives which are inherent in human nature to become united with God. But the plan laid down by other faiths is not comprehensive and universally suitable. The Jewish faith, for instance, has presented God in a fearful form and too much stress is laid on His wrath and desire for punishment. This was because the Israelites had become accustomed to submission through fear and severity on account of their long subjection to the iron rule of the Pharaoh who was a cruel king. So God manifested Himself to them in the dreadful form of thunder and earthquake, and at last their dispositions assumed the normal state. But the new spirit of harshness and severity when indulged for a long time turned the national mind the other way about. Then quite agreeably to these prevailing conditions Jesus came with a message of peace and love, and instead of thunder and earthquake the holy spirit appeared in the form of a lovely and meek dove, and stress was laid on the love of

God, so that the evil of too much imbibing the spirit of Divine severity and punishment might be remedied. When the Christians too in their turn became too much imbued with the spirit of gentleness and love and showed a tendency to neglect actions, need was felt for another law. The other faiths also were subject to the same process. To satisfy a temporary need emphasis is laid in some of them upon the wrath and punishment of God and in others on love and kindness. When the circumstances under which those laws were sent changed, the laws forthwith lost their usefulness. Now when time had arrived when the perfect wisdom of God had designed one faith for the whole world, a comprehensive and universal revelation was sent to the Holy prophet of Arabia. This revelation suits all dispositions and is free from all local and temporary elements. So we do not, like the vile detractors of the righteous, say that the pre-Islamic faiths are false, but on the other hand, we hold them to be true and from God, but at the same time the love of truth and fact compels us to declare that Islam alone enjoys a comprehensive and universal character and that in the presence of Islam other faiths can claim no *raison de'etre* The plan of attaining nearness to God as set forth in each of those faiths was correct and successful in its own time and under the circumstances under which they were revealed, but now when the social progress has united the world, and human knowledge has greatly expanded, those plans have lost their virtue. Now Islam is the only religion that can afford guidance for the world by means of its flawless teachings. Different faiths have different virtues in them, but Islam is the one complete treasure of all those and other additional virtues. Thus it is that to-day on the surface of the earth there is no faith except Islam which can help man to establish a connection with his Creator. When God has sent His perfect law, He has closed all other doors for the expression of His will, and no body can reach God now unless he surrenders himself to the yoke of Islam. I am sorry to say that the paucity of time prevents me from going into further details of this subject, otherwise I would have shown by adding examples that measures presented by Islam for a connection with God find no parallel in other faiths.

KINDNESS TO THE CREATURES OF GOD.

As explained above, besides establishing a connection between man and God a religion has another business to perform, which is kindness to the creatures of God. This subject naturally falls into 3 divisions :—(1) man's duty to his own self, (2) man's duty to others, (3) man's duty to lower animals. I shall take all three separately and see what guidance Islam offers for the suitable discharge of these duties and obligations.

MAN'S DUTY TO HIS OWN SELF.

Different faiths have said much to regulate mutual dealings, but very little is found as to how one should deal with one's self. Islam is the only exception in this respect. It has not neglected this side of human life. It has clearly defined the ways in which man is required to treat his self. This point is so important in itself that no religion can be perfect without throwing light upon it, because man cannot be perfectly reformed until he is told how to reform his own self first. Body re-acts on the soul, and any change in the physical framework effects a corresponding change in the indwelling soul. We see that a serious injury on the body affects the soul as well, and the mind feels pain along with the body, and several times it happens that a hurt sends a man out of his senses, and often body begins to waste away on account of some sorrow and man becomes weak in a few hours. It has often occurred that a few days after a severe shock a man's hair have turned grey. In short, we learn from experience that body and soul are inseparably inter-connected; they act and re-act upon each other. Under these circumstances it is evident that the state of the body will affect that of the soul and a faith which is silent about the treatment of the body leads its follower only half way and then leaves him alone to perish, and a faith which gives only half measures can not be universally suitable and is likely to prove fatal to many. We find that some faiths recommend physical tortures for spiritual elevation, the result being that the votaries of these faiths resort to such exercises as

spoil their bodies. Some are seen sitting near a burning fire in the heat of the summer and thus they destroy their own bodies. Some are found standing in cold water in the dead of winter. Some stand facing the sun in the morning and keep their steady gaze fixed on it till the evening and thus spoil their eyesight. Some remain suspended head downward and consider it a great merit. Some again emasculate themselves. Some shun all pure food for the sake of self-mortificatian, and if they eat good food at all, mix some impurities in it and thus mortify themselves. Some keep their lips closed and observe constant silence, and thus attempt to secure nearness to God. Some eat filth and the flesh of dead human bodies. Some fast every day. Some like to remain celebate throughout their lives. Some avoid bathing and cutting off the nails and other things concerning cleanliness. In short, there are enjoined to different faiths hundreds of things which are declared to be real merits, while as a matter of fact they are nothing short of acts of cruelty, and to do them is to be cruel to one's self, and thus to be guilty of ingratitude to God for His favours. When God has given the hand to grasp with, feet to walk with, and the tongue to speak with, these are all blessings, but how blame-worthy is one who so wantonly destroys them. Such a man insults God, because he throws away His blessings; and besides this, it is a tyranny to one's own self, because it involves needless trouble for the body. Those who make a vow to remain unmarried throughout their lives, and do certain other acts that hamper the propagation of the species cannot find favour in the sight of God. Those who shun pure food, and eat filth are cruel to themselves and get into the ways of Satan, because a harm done to the body is a harm done to the soul. Such a person will either become too dull to comprehend delicate problems or will go mad. In either case he will deprive himself of the favour of God which is reserved for the worshippers. No righteous servant of God has ever been known for certain to have had recourse to such suicidal exercises of the body. It is possible that as a temporary measure some Teacher should have recommended such a thing to curb the abnormal

growth of animal passions in any one people or individual, but a universal religion has no room for such makeshifts, because it is to stop once for all the progressive state of the human race which is the fruit of the sciences developed by these favours of God. Imagine for a while the state of a country all the inhabitants of which take to hanging head downwards, or to sitting idly near a fire, or for the sake of a certain *rishi* or Incarnation take to life-long celebacy. This will simply hasten the doom of the country, and in a short time, it will become denuded of human life and populated by wild animals. If God had not implanted a hatred for such silly exercises in the very nature of man, perhaps many nations would have been consigned to ruin by these exercises. But it is the favour of God that He has implanted in the heart of man a repulsion against such injurious devotions. The plain result of these exercises is the emaciation of the body, and therefore a weakening of the power of resisting evil. It is an admitted fact that when a man becomes weak, he falls a prey to different sorts of whims and fancies, so very often the consequence of such exercises is that, instead of avoiding sin, man falls into it, and runs headlong into the mouth of the dragon he desires to flee from. So a faith that enjoins such obnoxious teachings goes to an undesirable excess and encourages outrages to the rights of the self. In contrast to these extremes, there are some faiths that have vacillated to the other extreme and have declared devotions to be entirely worthless and see no advantage in them. They hold that God need not put any body to trouble by keeping him hungry. Under this subterfuge they have got rid of all worship. But this is as wrong as the mortification of the body by harmful physical self-inflictions. It is beyond doubt that too much indulgence in worldliness and self-decoration makes the body lazy and consequently the soul inactive and slothful. Such men at last have their hearts entirely darkened. The body is to the soul as shell is to the kernel. Although the real object to be striven for is the kernel and not the shell, yet separation of the kernel from the shell will destroy it in a very short time. Similarly, if the body is not

allowed to participate in worship, the latter will not last long Those, therefore, who consider worship to be purely an act of the mind and nothing more will surely cease to pray even mentally, because the kernel separated from the shell becomes dried up in a very short time.

Besides this, there is another consideration. Our body is under an obligation to God quite as much as our soul, so it is only natural that both the body and the soul may take part in the worship of God. The reality is that the body of man is like a conveyance by means of which he carries on this journey of life. Unless efforts are made to keep it from indolence and fatal enervation, it is not possible for man to get through the journey safely. A good horseman does not permit his horse to be too fat to walk fast or too thin to walk at all; so unless both sides of the body are well guarded, success is impossible. In this respect also, we cannot help saying that if there is a religion that regulates our dealings with ourselves in consonance with its harmonious development and without detriment to any part, it is no other than Islam, which in all its injunctions pays due regard to the sickly and weaklings as well as to the condition of those who, in order to preserve their bodies, ignore their souls altogether. The Holy Quran lays down a general rule in this connection : ولا تلقوا بايديكم الى التهلكة "Drag not yourselves into destruction by your own hands" (II, 196). That is to say, a Muslim should not, in his worship, food and other actions, do anything which may lead to evil consequences. The word تهلكة used in this verse means such an action as results in destruction. The word, as used here in the sense of doing anything not bearing good fruit, also refers to the fact that Islam does not forbid the endangering of one's life in order to save one's religion, honour or civil rights, but it simply prohibits such action as leads to no good result and involves danger and destruction for one's life and other useful things in vain. This is a general rule. Besides this, the Holy Quran as well as the Traditions, contains detailed regulations in this connection. As for instance, the Holy Quran says :—

يسئلونك ماذا احل لهم قل احل لكم الطيبات

"People ask thee what things are allowed as good. Say in reply that is is lawful for you to eat all that is not in any way harmful to your senses, manners and religion" (V, 5). Again it says :—

يا يها الذين آمنوا لا تحرموا طيبات ما احل الله لكم ولا تعتدوا .
ان الله لا يحب المعتدين

"O ye believers, all pure things that are not injurious to you in any respect are made lawful to you; do not make them unlawful for yourselves. Be moderate and trespass not the limits, for the trespassers are never likely to win the favour of God" (V, 89). It signifies that a Muslim should not, for the purpose of self-mortification, declare any thing not injurious to his religion, senses, or body in any way, as unlawful, and that while it is forbidden to make any kind of pure and useful food unlawful for self-restraint, it is also forbidden to indulge so much in eating as to forget all else. These are extremes which are not liked by God. Hlittle reflection on this verse makes it clear beyond even a shadow of doubt that these teachings are suited to all countries and all ages and are practicable for men of different social positions, old or young, small or great, sick or healthy. Is there, then, we ask, any religion other than Islam, that has given teachings which go along the middle course?

In addition to the above verses there is another verse: كلوا واشربوا ولا تسرفوا *i.e.*, "Eat and drink, but do not go beyond the proper bounds." That is to say, it should not be that you may devote your life to good dishes and cold drinks, but your way of life should be to use all pure things as you feel need for them. With regard to food, drink and other choice things and necessities, God says :—

قل من حرم زينة الله التى اخرج لعباده والطيبت من الرزق

"Say, who has rendered unlawful those decorative things which God has created for His creatures, and who rendered unlawful pure food?" (VII, 33). It means that when God has

created certain things for adorning purposes, who is it that can make them unlawful or prohibit their use? If their use was forbidden, why did God create them?

Similarly, the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him) has said about divine worship that a Muslim should resort to worship as much as may be pleasing to his mind, and that one should cease praying when one's mind begins to feel tired. It is said that once the Holy Prophet entered the mosque, and on seeing a string hanging asked what sort of string it was. The reply was that it was for Zainab (the wife of the Holy Prophet) to support herself with whenever she felt drowsy during the prayer. The Holy Prophet ordered the cord to be removed, saying that such worship was not allowable Similarly about fasting Abdullah son of Omar reports that when the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him) heard about his vow of constant fasting, he called him and told him that it was not right. But when he insisted upon the permission, the Holy Prophet allowed him to fast every other day, and not every day, although he said that he could fast every day. The Holy Prophet added that it was the best thing for him to do and to exceed it was to injure the health. In short, the Holy Prophet sent him away, saying, "Abdullah, your body has a right over you and your wife has also a right over you."

Similarly, about rendering any part of the body useless, we read in the Traditions that some companions of the Holy Prophet proposed to emasculate themselves for life-long celebacy, but disapproving their ideas the Holy Prophet said, لا رهبانية في الاسلام In "Islam there is no monasticism," That is, Islam does not allow men and women to become monks and nuns,as Christianity does.

From the above quotations it can be easily seen how Islam has given perfect teachings about that part of kindliness to the creatures of God that concerns man's own self, how these

teachings are free from extremes and follow the middle line of conduct and how beautifully and beneficently body is made a co-partner with the soul in divine worship. Islam has taken so great care of the health of man that it has allowed many concessions in prayers while on a journey, so that they may not prove burdensome to any body and no weak constitution and disposition may suffer therefrom. So about the care of self, Islam enjoys perfect uniqueness in laying down complete and comprehensive laws practicable for all places and all men and all time.

KINDNESS TO OTHERS.

The second aspect of the problem under discussion is the teachings that a religion prescribes about the treatment of others than one's own-self. Now I take up that side of the question.

General View.

But before I enter into details, I should like to give the general view presented by Islam with regard to the treatment of others. The Holy Quran says :—

ان الله يامر بالعدل والاحسان وايتاء ذى القربى وينهى
عن الفحشاء والمنكر والبغى يعظكم لعلكم تذكرون

i. e., "God commandeth you to do justice, beneficence and kindness to kith and kin, and forbids vice, evil and revolt. He exhorteth you so that ye may correct yourselves." In this verse God has set forth three injunctions and three prohibitions, or each prohibition corresponds to an injunction. While He has ordered a certain thing to do, he has forbidden the parallel evil. The first step to be taken is the step of justice. No usurpation of rights is permitted. If a Muslim is a servant, he must do the work assigned to him by his employer faithfully. If he is a labourer, he must labour diligently for his engager. If he owes a debt, he is required to pay it. If he owes an obligation to some body, he is desired to discharge it in the best way he can. In short, he is commanded to

observe justice in all his undertakings and tolerate no violation of rights. After he has completed the first step of justice, he is commanded to take the next step of beneficence. That is to say, he should not only discharge his duty to others but do something over and above. When justice becomes to him a matter of course, he thinks how he can be useful to men by means of his strength, power, wealth, honour and position. When he completely attains to this stage of spiritual and moral advancement, he should not rest contented but endeavour to proceed still further, and beneficence should appear to him not a very high level of moral virtue. He must strive after the stage of kindness to kith and kin which ranks far above the stage of beneficence. Beneficene is resorted to under certain conditions; as for instance, helping a man in trouble or doing a good turn in return for some benefit received is a piece of beneficence, and thus it is done out of mercy or compassion. But kindness to kith and kin needs no mercy or compassion to move men to kindness. The mother is kind to her children, not out of compassion, but because they are a part of her body. Several times the parents are poor and the son is rich, but they continue showing kindness to him according to their own limited means. So the good treatment of the parents for their children is neither in return for any benefit received nor out of anything like compassion. Their relationship rises above these things and is firmly rooted in love. So kindness to kith and kin, that is, goodness as done to those near and dear, is much higher than beneficence, and God invites Muslims to attain to this stage after they have reached the lower stage of beneficence. So a Muslim is required to love mankind as a mother loves her children, neither out of compassion nor out of a desire to receive good in return. At this stage a Muslim shows kindness equally to the rich and the poor, not under an impulse of the moment, but out of the pure motive of real and genuine love for mankind.

Along with these three stages of moral advance the corresponding evils are also to be avoided, which concern mans

own self, or involve a loss of the rights of others or a breach of the peace of the land. Combining these injunctions and prohibitions God has completed the whole height of kindness to be shown to mankind, because kindness is capable of only two divisions—(1) doing good, (2) avoiding evil.

In this verse both sides are completely dealt with. A Muslim should do good to others proceeding from the lowest rung of justice and attaining to that sublime sense of natural love for mankind. He should avoid evil from the grossest vice of rebellion against lawful authority to the hidden delinquencies latent in his own nature, because it is known their play may be harmful to any creature of God. In short, all the aspects of vice and virtue are so exhaustively dwelt upon in this single verse that no improvement is conceivable. It is impossible to show a superior moral code. Islam stands at the highest pinnacle of moral edifice and there is no room left higher up. I am positively confident that no faith can vie with Islam in this gradual moral training of its followers to the highest imaginable stage of goodness.

After this general view, I proceed to go into a little detail and take some of the kindred severally.

Kindness to Parents.

Parents occupy the foremost place among the blood relations, because God has made them the means of bringing every human being into this world. The love which parents bear towards their children is pure and disinterested. They nurse and look after the child when it is quite helpless. At such a time the trouble they have to take in bringing up the child can be better imagined than described. That is why the son can not repay even a hundredth part of the good done to him by the parents, and there are few children who can make fitting return for the good they receive from their parents. Islam has therefore enjoined strict obedience to them. It says

قضى ربک الا تعبدوا الا ایاه وبالوالدین احسانا ۰ اما یبلغن

عندك الكبر احد هما او كلا هما فلا تقل لهما اف ولا تنهرهما وقل
لهما قولا كريما واخفض لهما جناح الذل من الرحمة وقل رب ارحمهما
كما ربياني صغيرا

" God has commanded you not to worship any except Him; and do good to your parents. If either or both of the parents grow old when you are young, don't say even undesirable words to them and never speak to them harshly. On the other hand, when you happen to talk to them, talk gently with due regard to the requirements of respect, and with all kindness spread your arms of love to serve them, and with all this consider that you have done nothing to repay the debt you owe them. To make up this deficiency pray to God, ' O God, we are unable to return the good we have received at their hands. So become Thou their guardian for us, and treat them kindly as they did us when we were helpless " (XVII, 24, 25). This is the unique teaching which Islam presents with regard to the rights of the parents. Is there a faith that brings forward teachings comparable with these teachings? All religions have certain virtues, and as all of them are from God they contain many truths, but the perfect teachings of the Holy Quran concerning parents are marvellous and are not to be found in any other faith. How beautifully in one verse so many things are explained in a perfectly logical order. First of all, it is told that worship is due to Allah and the good done by the parents is nothing in comparison with God's favours. So we are forbidden to follow in the footsteps of those who in their endeavour to serve parents do not even hesitate to bow down before them, and consider it lawful to perform all that makes for worship, and thus while honouring the parents they dishonour the Lord their God. The second point worth attention in this verse is that parents are not to be worshipped but treated with beneficence. Here as well Islam excels other faiths which inculcate good treatment and service for the parents, but Islam advises not only good treatment but beneficence, which, as the word *ihsan* singifies, is something

done over and above the good received. When a workman works for the employers in return for the wages which he receives, his conduct can never be termed beneficence (*ihsan*), but *muhsin* (a beneficent person) will be he who repays more than what is due from him. So Islam does not enjoin good treatment only, for it is possible that good treatment shown by the son may even fall short of the good done to him by the parents. Such a son will be said to be treating his parents well and will be styled an obedient son, but certainly not *muhsin* (beneficent) towards them and hence will be lagging behind the stage of good enjoined upon the son by the Holy Quran for the parents. He will be doing his duty to the parents in conformity with the teachings of Islam only when he tries to do more than what they had done for him. See how sublime are the teachings of Islam with regard to the treatment of parents. How beautifully a warning is sounded to maintain the superior position of God and worship of parents is forbidden, and how nicely a refutation is offered of all those faiths which require the son when married to bestow all care upon his wife, to the entire neglect of his parents. Again, it is added that when the parents grow old, the son should not utter even a harsh word against them. For the harsh speech the condition of old age is added, because, when old, persons become cross and irritable; so the condition means that when old they are likely to be peevish and fretful and their conduct is sometimes teasing, even then a son should speak gently to them. It is considered bad to reject their demand sternly, but kindliness of speech is strongly recommended to the extent of becoming gentleness itself for them. That is not all. The son is further commanded to supplement his efforts by constant prayers for them, so that God may make up the deficiency left by him in the performance of his duty to them.

These are the teachings of Islam for the son when he is alive; but if the son dies leaving his parents, even then the parents are not ignored. Nor again to safeguard their rights

other relatives are overlooked. Islam has not, like many faiths, ordered the whole property of the deceased progeny to be given away to the parents, because such a course deprives many other deserving relations of their rights ; as for instance, the wife and children of the deceased have equally valid rights to his property, and if the whole property goes to the parents, the wife and the children will be left without any resources. Nor, again, has Islam commanded the parents to be passed over entirely in the disposal of the deceased son's property, as some faiths have prescribed. But Islam has, on the other hand, quite characteristically struck the golden mean and decided that the parents are entitled to a portion of the deceased son's property. If the deceased has children, the parents are to get one-sixth part of the property, and if the deceased is childless, then one-thi.d will go to the mother and the remainder to the father (but in case the husband or wife, as the case may be, of the deceased is alive, the parents will be entitled to the property of their deceased progeny after the deduction of the portion prescribed for the said husband or wife).

Treatment of Children by the Parents.

Having said enough about the treatment of the parents by the children, I come to the treatment of children by the parents as required by Islam. It is beyond question that the parents have an instinctive love for their children, and outwardly, therefore, there seems to be no necessity for any religion to give positive commandments for the good treatment of the children. But notwithstanding the inherent affection of the parents for the children, world's history shows that there is yet need on the part of religion to regularise and methodise the instinct of love that the parents feel towards their children. We learn from history that the followers of seme faiths have suffered much from the lack of any direct teachings on the subject. The only injunctions in this connection to be met with in some faiths are those for the heritage which is needed in every household, but utter silence as to the kind of treat-

ment to be meted out to the children by the parents is observable in all the faiths except Islam, which is a perfect religion and which is therefore free from this defect. It came at a time when the world needed a law all-comprehensive in character and covering all the different sides of human life. Other faiths being only local and temporary were meant to pave the way for this universal faith.

In some countries for some reason or other infanticide had become rife. Some people despatched their daughters to avoid the disgrace of marrying them to those belonging to other households. Some made away with them through fear lest they, when grown up, should fall into sin and thus disgrace them. Some killed their children on account of poverty. Even in these days when the education of children has become very expensive some people in Europe and America render themselves incapable of procreation, which is only another way of infanticide. Islam abhors such a practice and says :—

و اذا الموءدة سئلت بای ذنب قتلت

"Those who bury their daughters alive will be questioned why and for what offence they had done so" (LXXXI, 9, 10). Again the Holy Quran says :—

و لا تقتلوا اولادکم خشیة املاق نحن نرزقهم و ایاکم

"Don't kill your children through fear that your property will be spent away in bringing them up, because whatever you have is given by Us and to them also We shall give." Again to do away with the doubt as to whether the killing of children is forbidden through fear of loss of property or for other causes also, God says : ان قتلهم کان خطأ کبیرا "The killing of children is a grave sin." That is to say, not only killing for fear of loss of property is a sin but from whatever cause it may proceed, it is a sin. That one cause was by way of instance.

So much about the killing of children. Next come teachings about the bringing up of children. The first

injunction is about the guardianship. Islam declares the father to be the guardian of children, and thus it has once for all decided the question of guardianship and done away with all chances of shuffling off the responsibility of rearing the chilldren on the part of the father on getting angry with his wife. Under these circumstances, whether the husband is pleased with his wife or not, Government will compel him to provide for his children according to his means till they attain the age of maturity.

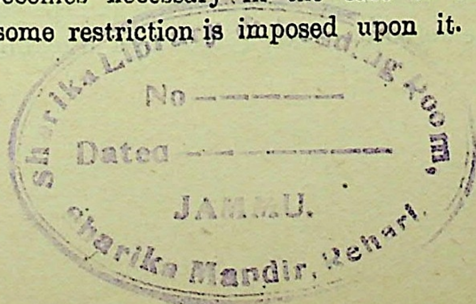
Besides this, Islam gives positive injunctions about the training and education of children. It says:—

یا یہا ا لذ ین آ منوا قوا ا نفسکم و ا ھلیکم نا را

"O Ye believers, save yourselves and your householders (wife and children) from hell-fire." Here a Muslim is required to educate his children so that they may not remain ignorant and therefore unable to know God and be condemned to hell-fire. Similarly, we read in the traditions that the Holy Prophet commanded the Muslims to honour their children and not to treat them in a manner productive of meanness of disposition.

Again, the Holy Prophet said that to educate and instruct the children was even better than charity and it is easy to see the truth of this remark. For the man who devotes his whole attention to the service of others, to the entire neglect of his own children, does a deed which ends with his life, while he who educates his children and leads them to the path of virtue leaves the door of his good deeds open even after his death.

Again, beating the children is forcibly deprecated and harassing and teasing them in also condemned, because beating and constant annoyance spoil manners and therefore vitiate the moral fabric of the child. But as corporal punishment sometimes becomes necessary in the case of children, therefore a wholesome restriction is imposed upon it. Beating on the



face is prohibited, but such part of the body is to be selected for this purpose as is least susceptible to injury.

As to the fraternal affection, we find clear directions to maintain and preserve it. The parents are ordered to observe even-handedness in all their dealings with their children, and partiality to any one of them is forbidden, because invidious distinction engenders mutual ill-will and party spirit. It is reported that a person came and said to the Holy Prophet that he had given a slave to one of his sons and that the Prophet might remain a witness to that act of his. The Prophet asked whether he had given a slave to each of the other sons too. The man replied in the negative. Thereupon the Prophet enquired of him whether he wished them all to be equally good and righteous. The man replied in the affirmative. Then the Holy Prophet said that it was not proper for him to be partial to one, that he should either give one slave to each of his sons or take back that slave from that one also. Thus the Holy Prophet prohibited the creation of party-feeling and ill-will among the sons by showing partial treatment to one. Thus Islam hates the custom of handing down all the property to one, to the utter disregard of others. Islam is so scrupulous in the maintenance of fraternal bond that even a father is not allowed to give greater portion to any one son than the others.

Besides this, Islam has given particular teachings for the bringing up of daughters. The Holy Prophet said that if God gave a man daughters and he took proper care of them, those daughters will be the means of saving him from hell-fire. From this it is easy to see that many of the other faiths have either ignored this side of the subject, or have given very imperfect regulations about it. But Islam has dealt with the matter thoroughly. With singular wisdom and prudence it has ordered the parents to save themselves and their progeny from destruction. Is there any religion, we ask, that has given such detailed teachings for the care and protection of children? In the absence of such thorough teachings, other

religions have no right to hold up to the world the promise of a regeneration. Their day is done. All of them did good to mankind in their own respective times, but now in the presence of this perfect faith they are not needed.

Brothers and Sisters.

In addition to parents and children Islam has not ignored sisters and brethern, and good treatment is ordered to be meted out to them. A person dies without an issue; his sisters and brothers will have a share in his property, and thus the measure of good behaviour towards them is brought to completion.

Wife.

Although the followers of different faiths are seen outrivaling one another in the care and protection of the rights of womanfolk, yet their claim is not worth notice, because their assumed attitude towards womankind finds no support or sanction in their religions. Their claim so boldly put forward is not based on any religious authority but is a natural outcome of civic progress. The independent action or conduct of a certain people cannot entitle a faith to any praise unless the faith itself gives clear teachings pertaining thereto. But we notice with regret that other faiths with hundreds of good points are awfully lacking in respect of female rights. Even Christianity is silent about the rights of woman. Whatever noise is heard there in favour of woman is either the result of a healthy contact with Islam or the natural consequence of growing civilisation. Islam is the only faith which has paid adequate attention to this downtrodden class of humanity. The injunctions given about the mother, daughter and sisters have already been detailed above. Now I would examine the injunctions about the wife. This aspect of the question has not even been touched by some faiths and there are others which have given about it defective and faulty regulations which may perhaps have sufficed for days long gone by, when the condition of womankind was hopelessly miserable, but which now can not be safely acted upon when a new spirit has enlivened the lives of men. In

this age only Islamic teachings can satisfy the rights of women. The very first injunction that raises womankind from the depth of degradation to the level of equality with men is thus given in the Holy Quran : و اللہ جعل لکم من انفسکم ازوا جا* i. e., "God has created your wives from your own species, so you should not look down upon them like inferior beings and treat them harshly." Besides this we read in the Holy Quran † و لهن مثل الذی علیهن بالمعروف و للرجال علیهن درجة "Women have such rights over men as men have over women, but men enjoy a certain superiority in the control of the household." It means that the final decision rests with the husband in all household affairs. This removes the undue excess to which the case of woman is sometimes carried. Some people neglect their wives altogether and do not accord good treatment to them. For such people God says:—

و لا تعضلو هن لتذ هبوا ببعض ما آ تیتمو هن‡

"Do not oppress them so that you may usurp their property by frightening them." Furthermore it is added : و عاشرو هن بالمعروف "Accord nice treatment to your wives." Moreover in order to safeguard the rights of a woman she is allowed one-eighth of the deceased husband's property if the latter has children, and one-fourth if he has no children. Again, Islam holds her to be the absolute owner of the property she possesses. Her parents or husband have no right to encroach upon her property. Besides the Quranic injunction the Holy Prophet too, both by precept and example, greatly emphasised the care and respect of female rights. He said : خیرکم خیرکم لا هله "The best of you is one who accords the best treatment to his wife." He is also represented as saying, "O ye people, accept my advice with regard to women. Deal with them kindly. You have no right to treat your wives otherwise than well, except when they are guilty of open vice. If they act undesirably, part company with them for some time. If this temporary separation sets them right, well and good. Failing

* XVI, 73. † II, 229. ‡ IV, 20.

that, inflict some corporal punishment not seriously hurtful to the body." So far about the rights of women over men, but the rights of men over women are not ignored. Women are ordered to faithfully dischargs their obligations to their husbands and think of their comfort and welfare. They are required to be helpful to them in trouble and tribulation. They are further commanded to look after the husband's children and not to be ungrateful. In short Islam has neglected neither side of the question. Both sides are fairly dealt with, the rights and obligations of men over women and *vice versa* are thoroughly regulated and thus this sublime connection which is the foundation stone of all human progress is consolidated and made proof against the devastating influence of winds and waves.

Other Relatives.

The other kith and kin also are not left out of consideration. God says in the Holy Quran : فآت ذا القربی حقه *i. e.*, 'Respect the rights of your kinsmen.' In this verse good treatment is ordered for them not as an act of charity but as a right of theirs. The word 'right' is used because in the absence of parents or husband kinsmen have got to take care of the survivors and thus they have to work as guardians in place of parents. So when it is binding upon the kinsmen to take care of the survivors, then they deserve specially good treatment. In addition to this there are many more injunctions that enjoin good treatment for kinsmen. Once a person asked the Holy Prophet to tell him a deed which might be sufficient for him to make him deserving of paradise. The Holy Prophet said in reply "Worship God, set up no equals to Him, say your prayers, give legal alms, and mete out good treatment to your kith and kin."

Neighbour.

Those that are near and dear to us are of two kinds. First are those who are bound by a blood tie, but there are others

that are bound by no bond of consanguinity but nearness of residence. Islam has not neglected even the latter class. The Holy Quran says :—

واعبدوا الله ولا تشرکوا به شیئا وبالوالدین احسانا وبذی
القربی والیتمی والمساکین والجار ذی القربی والجار
الجنب والصاحب بالجنب وابن السبیل

" Worship God, set up no parallels to Him, do good to your parents and those near and dear to you, and the orphans, the needy and that neighbour whose house has a common wall with yours, and also those that are a little far away but in the same quarter or the same village. Accord good treatment to one who is your sharer in trade or who is your colleague or companion in a journey." So according to these teachings a man, on the one hand, can come under the definition of one near and dear by living close or by partnership in a business. The Holy Prophet says that the archangel Gabriel so often emphasised good treatment to the neighbours that I thought that neighbours might be made heirs. About companions in a journey it was directed that if there be room on the camel-back and the companion be going on foot, he should be seated on the camel. Again if a man be on a journey and he has food more than he needs, he is required to make his companions of the journey share his food with him.

Besides this, about those who are sitting in a conference we read :—

یا ایها الذین آمنوا اذا قیل لکم تفسحوا فی المجالس
فافسحوا یفسح الله لکم

' O ye believers, if you are sitting in a conference, and some body comes and asks you to make room for him, then you should sit closer and give him a seat. God will seat you in His close proximity.' Similarly to respect the feelings of the associates the Holy Prophet directed that if three men happened to be

sitting at a certain place, two of them should not be whispering, because this would give the third pain of the mind.

Treatment of elders by the younger and vice versa.

There is yet another general injunction. The Holy Prophet says:—

من لم يرحم صغيرنا ولم يوقر كبيرنا فليس منا

"He who does not show mercy to the younger and respect for the elders, is not from amongst us." This short but significant sentence is a comprehensive commentary on the relationship that ought to govern mutual dealings between the elders and the younger.

Guests.

Even guests are not allowed to go unnoticed. The Holy Prophet says: من يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر فليكرم ضيفه "He who believes in Allah and the day of judgment, should honour the guests."

Enemies.

In addition to love and friendship, enmity is also a feature of social life. This feature determines more appropriately the condition of one's mind as regards kindliness to God's creatures than any softer feelings, because where there exists love, one is compelled to show good treatment, but where there is nothing like love and enmity is the ruling passion, the real state of human mind makes itself manifest. Hence a faith, the teachings of which breathe a spirit of love and sympathy even for the enemies and are free from all sorts of disturbance and evil, is the real guide for mankind. Different faiths have given different teachings about enemies, but even a surface glance is enough to show that the Islamic teachings in this connection are of universal application and productive of peace and mutual amity. Islam divides enmity into two kinds:—religious and worldly. Religious enmity is that enmity which is caused by difference in religious views and the

worldly enmity is that which is caused by some worldly discussion. God has given different injunctions for either of these kinds, hence both will be separately dealt with. Taking the worldly enmity, Islam has again subdivided it into two kinds. One concerning the heart and the other pertaining to actions. As to the one concerning the heart, Islam orders a Muslim to take no notice of it and to harbour ill-will against no body. A Muslim is not allowed to discontinue speaking with any body on account of some dispute for more than 3 days. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him) further added that one who after a quarrel first clears his mind and forgetting the injury goes first and becomes reconciled deserves the mercy of God. In short, Islam positively denounces hidden enmity of the heart because it is like a poison that eats away good manners and results in the grossest evil which descends from generation to generation and ruins nations after nations.

We now come to the enmity of actions, i.e., active enmity as opposed to mental one. If some body quite unjustly troubles others and harasses them, the first injunction about him is that a Muslim should not cherish any malice against him in his mind. Grudge is forbidden under all circumstances, because it creates mischief and ruins morals. As regards the recompense of the active evil done, there are two injunctions about it. One is pardon and the other chastisement. Both these injunctions are for different occasions, which are clearly specified in the verse :—

و جزاء سيئة سيئة مثلها فمن عفا و اصلح فا جره على الله
انه لا يحب الظالمين*

'The punishment of evil is evil proportionate thereto. But he who pardons, in case pardon leads to the reformation of the offender, will be rewarded by God and God does not like the unjust. In this verse in return for the evil done a Muslim is required to do two things. First, he is allowed to punish

* XLII, 41.

the offender, and secondly he is asked to forgive, and the occasion for either case is also described. Reformation of the offender should be the determining factor; whichever step, punishment or pardon, leads to the reformation of the offender may be resorted to. This two-fold injunction refers to two kinds of men. There are some who shun enmity in future if their mischief is overlooked and their fault is connived at. Thus they feel sorry and become converted into friends, as the Holy Quran quite pertinently says :—

ولا تستوی الحسنة ولا السیئة ادفع بالتی هی احسن
فاذا الذی بینک وبینه عداوة کانه ولی حمیم *

"Doing good and forgiveness and chastisement are not the same. So you may return good treatment for the evil of your enemy. The ultimate consequence will be that he will be changed into a fast friend." This verse tells us the underlying principle of forgiveness which, as further explained in the previous verse, must be resorted to only when it conduces to the reformation of the offender. If forgiveness is likely to worsen matters, then punishment is the proper remedy, and pardon in this case will be a cruelty to the general mankind. Pardon will embolden such people as are only amenable to harshness, in the commission of outrages, and thus become a veritable danger to the community. Here an objection may be raised that it can not be known beforehand that pardon will lead to unhappy consequences in any particular case, so it is impossible to administer the proper remedy. The reply is that the disposition of the offender will be judged on the basis of experience. When repeated pardon is seen to do him no good, he is refractory against the influence of forgiveness and needs the sterner hand of punishment to reform himself. These are the only teachings that adhere so nicely to the mean and fair line of action. Anything else must be allowed to be local and temporary. As for instances, the Israelites were required to avenge themselves on their enemies to remove the evil effect of long subservience and create in them a spirit of

* XLI, 35.

chivalry and enthusiasm. The result was that in a short time the Israelites got rid of those weaknesses. Otherwise they had fallen into such a sink of timorousness that when they were surrounded by the hosts of Pharaoh, then notwithstanding the horrible barbarism of the cruel Egyptian king, many of them were willing to return. A nation is reduced to such a condition when it becomes extremely timid ; otherwise when brought to bay, even some harmless and cowardly animals too are driven into resistance, although they are nothing in comparison with their assailants. So the readiness of many tribes of Israelites to return and their fear of the enemy at every step indcate that they were in a very mean state of cowardice. So to kindle a spirit of boldness and bravery it was for the time being necessary to order them to be severe in the exaction of revenge, and the injunction suiting the state of affairs was given as follows :—

" And thine eye shall not pity ; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.' (Deut. XIX, 21).

When a long time passed and the Jews continued acting upon this injunction generation after generation, a spirit of bloodthirstiness and hardheartedness was created in them, to soften which Jesus, the prophet, came with the message :—

" Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth : but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil : but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray

for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." (Matt. V, 38—45).

Whoever lent an ear to this message lost his hardheartedness, and at last there sprang up a class of men who, instead of having a warlike disposition, were moved by love and affection. But could these teachings be everlasting? Certainly not! They could be put into force only among those who had been long under the influence of Mosaic teachings. So it was necessary that there were sent a faith which might deal with both disse of the problem, and give teachings with due regard to the need of the time. So the Holy Quran came and was read to the people. It presented to the world, on the one hand, the Mosaic law to punish the evil-doers in proportion to their offence, and on the other the Christian law of returning good for evil, with the additional proviso that discretion should be used in taking each of the steps. When punishment led to the reformation of the offender, it may be resorted to, and when pardon gave rise to this result, it might be taken recourse to. This is the mean teaching suited to all time and all climes. We declare with all emphasis that no other religion presents such teachings. If there is any religion which claims to have such teachings free from extremes, we shall thank its followers if they can show them from their own scriptures. There will be found to exist only three kinds of faiths, (1) those which inculcate evil for evil, (2) those which inculcate good for evil, (3) those which advocate indiscriminate pardon or indiscriminate punishment. But except Islam there is no faith which inculcates pardon when it leads to good results, and punishment where the same produces happy fruit. This regard for the result is a necessary condition of a perfect religion which all others than Islam lack.

Religious Rancour.

Next comes the problem of behaviour towards opponents in religion. It must be remembered in this connection that religious enmity and religious difference are two distinct things

according to Islam. We are forbidden to look upon and treat religious difference as enmity; on the other hand it is strictly enjoined upon us to do good to the followers of all religions and not to regard difference of religious views as enmity. We are further ordered to be kind and friendly to those who bear no ill-will against us on account of religious difference. But we are required to cut off all connection with those who use violence in matters religious and cannot tolerate anything against their own views, because self-respect does not allow friendship with those who desire to extirpate one's religion with sword and abuse God and His book. The Holy Quran says:—

لا ينهكم الله عن الذين لم يقاتلوكم في الدين ولم يخرجوكم من
ديارکم ان تبروهم وتقسطوا اليهم ان الله يحب المقسطين ۔ انما
ينهكم الله عن الذين قاتلوكم في الدين واخرجوكم من ديارکم
وظاهروا على اخراجكم ان تولوهم ومن يتولهم فاولئک هم
الظالمون*

i e., 'God does not prevent you from meting out good treatment to those who have not driven you out of your homes, nor have they fought against you for religious causes. But God likes those who observe justice and equity; of course He forbids you to maintain friendly relations with those who fight against you merely because you have accepted this faith, and for this very reason turn you out of your home, and side with your foes. One who lives on terms of amity with such people is a cruel person for he becomes the occasion of moving them to this evil. His free intercourse with them, notwithstanding the nasty language they use for his religion, will give him the idea that he is susceptible to their influence. It often happens that when a man becomes free from all sense of respect for his views, he becomes inclined to the opposite side. So for the protection of the true faith and the preservation of this noblest of human sentiments—respect for one's views, it was necessary to give such injunctions, because one who is over ready to fight

* LX, 9, 10,

for the sake of religion, and rushing into a violent rage to hear anything against his faith oversteps all bounds of decency and good sense is not fit for friendship. In short, in this commandment too Islam has adhered to the golden *via media*. On the one side love and affection is inculcated, and on the other steps are taken to keep intact the noble quality of self-respect without which man comes down to the level of lower animals, so that the followers of Islam may not lean to any one side. These are the teachings which are decidedly far in advance of those faiths which either advocate a policy of total aloofness from the followers of other faiths or inculcate love for those who show the extreme sort of religious hatred and fanaticism.

Good Treatment of Mankind in General.

The poor and the orphans.

Now I proceed to describe to you what Islam teaches about the treatment of those with whom no direct relationship exists. The first and foremost of them are orphans and the poor. They may be relatives as well, but Islam speaks of them in general; hence for our purpose they fall under the heading of mankind in general, because the orphans and the poor one has generally to do with are outside the sphere of relationship. Islam has given detailed and separate instructions for the treatment of relatives as well as others, but the shortness of time prevents me from discussing them separately, the thesis having already exceeded the usual length of a public discourse. Suffice it to say that Islam has given forcible injunctions binding Muslims to show good and kind treatment to the orphans and the poor. So emphatic is the Holy Quran on this point that failure to show kindness to orphans and poor people is declared to be a sin resulting in disgrace and dishonour. We are told in the Holy Quran that some people when visited by Divine wrath, ask what sort of treatment has been accorded to them. God says about such men :—

كلا بل لا تكرمون اليتيم

This is not what they say, but the reality is that they did not

take care of the orphans, and finding them helpless paid no heed to them. As to the poor, God says that it makes one worthy of hell to fail to show good treatment to them. Accordingly about some of the dwellers of hell God says :—

و لا يحض على طعا م ا لمسكين فليس له ا ليوم ههنا حميم*

'As they did not inculcate care of the poor, therefore God did not help them, or else God would have saved them from hellfire.'

Treatment of others than the poor and the orphans.

A Muslim is commanded, among other things, to hide the fault which he happens to observe in somebody. The Holy Prophet says :—

لا يستر عبد عبدا فى الد نيا ا لا ستره ا لله فى يوم ا لقيمة

"If some body covers the faults of another, God will cover his sins on the day of judgment."

Similarly, a Muslim is ordered not to take interest from anybody. On the other hand, he is required to help a needy person or lend money to him. Interest is an excess which one practises upon another. He tries to snatch away money from a brother when the latter is in need. Another commandment is that no body is permitted to answer the calls of nature in the still water, the reason being that if somebody should chance to use the water so defiled, it would cause harm and injury to him. In the same way another injunction which Islam has given to its followers for public good is not to relieve nature under a shady tree, on the roadside, or near a wharf, because thirsty and weary travellers are likely to be injured thereby. Besides this a Muslim is prohibited from going to the mosque after eating anything which emits a nasty smell or which causes revolting belching or causes the mouth to smell ill, because it is troublesome to others. This prohibition specifies the mosque, because it is the general place of assembly for Muslims, otherwise the prohibition is very general in its significance. To-day the railway authorities are compelled to realise the

* LXIX, 35, 36.

importance of this injunction and enactments forbidding smoking cigarettes, &c., have been found necessary. If Islamic teachings be acted upon, the necessity of framing additional rules and regulations can be at once done away with. These rules of decorum and decency, coming as they do, from a religion will have a far greater influence on the life of man than those formulated by a government.

Then again we find among the Islamic teachings that people of the place where some epidemic has broken out are not allowed to go elsewhere, because it will jeopardise the safety of other places by spreading the disease. India has quite recently learnt the paramount importance of this injunction. The result of the violation of this simple injunction was that people from infected areas were constantly seen going to the places which enjoyed perfect immunity from plague which, of course, became infected by and by. If India had been a Muhammadan country and this Islamic conduct had been observed, it is easy to see how the disease would have been nipped in the bud. The prohibition does not mean that even a makeshift residence outside the habitation is also forbidden, because the practice of the companions of the Holy Prophet allows the inhabitants of a locality to leave their houses at the time of an outbreak and spread out on the neighbouring fields. It simply means that one must not go from an infected place to places immume from it. Again Islam orders a Moslem to remove from a thoroughfare anything which is likely to injure the passers by in any way. As for instance, if a stone or a prickly bramble is lying on the road, a Moslem should remove it when he comes to see it. This act is regarded as an act of charity by the Holy Prophet.

Good Treatment of Animals.

While Islam has enjoined kindness to mankind, it has not ignored the dumb animals God says in the Holy Quran :—

وفی اموالهم حق للسائل والمحروم *

i.e., a Moslem is one a part of whose property goes to those

* LI, 20.

who can ask (mankind) as well as those who cannot ask (animals). The injunction signifies that it is a Moslem's duty to help men as well as animals out of his property. Similarly in the traditions, we find that cruelty to animals is strongly prohibited. The Holy Prophet has cursed the man who ties an animal and then shoots it The Holy Prophet forbade the branding of animals on the face which is a very delicate place, more sensitive to pain than other parts of the body, and ordered the branding to be done on the thighs which is now generally seen done in the world. It is reported to have been said by the Holy Prophet that a woman who shut up a cat and starved it to death was consigned to hell, that is to say, as a consequence of this cruel deed, she fell into an evil habit which resulted in her going to hell. In short Islam has prevented the Moslems from all sorts of cruelty to animals and thus has perfected its teachings in all possible ways. No extreme measures are promulgated, but, on the other hand,. a golden mean is observed in all the spheres of action which leads to happiness here as well as hereafter.

From all this it is abundantly clear that Islam is the only religion which is universal and can be followed in all ages by all types of men and leads to salvation. All the virtues which are found scattered in different faiths of the world together with all blissful teachings are found in Islam. As it is the religion sent by God for mankind, salvation is therefore the natural outcome of submission to it. It can establish a connection between man and God in this very life. Its followers have always been enjoying connection with God. This age too is no exception, God appointed one of the adherents of Islam as the Promised Messiah and the expected Mahdi. So seekers after truth and lovers of realities, rise and be up and doing. Reach this pure fountain of guidance and find in Islam the rest and the peace of mind for which your soul is thirsting. In Islam alone you can reach that high stage of spiritulity where union with God is the order of the day, and trancending the low domain of doubt you can plant yourselves triumphantly in the realm of certainty.

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS.

A monthly magazine dealing with important religious questions, offering a fair and impartial review of the prominent religions of the world and removing all misconceptions about Islam.

Alex. R. Webb, New Jersey, U. S. A.:—" Its articles are well written, thoughtful and clear expositions of spiritual truth."

" It is doing a glorious work."

Professor Houtsma, Editor-in-Chief of the Encyclopædia of Islam :—" Extremely intersting."

Count Tolstoi:—"The ideas are very profound and very true."

Review of Reviews, London :—" Western readers interested in the subject of the vitality of Muhammadanism should subscribe to the 'Review of Religions' "

Miss Mary A. Hunt, Illinois, U. S. A. :—" Every number is higly interesting and reveals the false conceptions regarding the Islamic faith that are proclaimed from pulpit and Press of these so-called civilised nations of the world."

Annual subscription, (English Edition) Rs. 4 for India, and Rs. 4-8 or 6s. for foregin countries; (Urdu Edition) Rs. 2 for India and Rs. 2-8 for foreign countries. Sample Copies, English As. 4, Urdu As. 2.

All communications should be addresssd to:—

THE MANAGER,
"REVIEW OF RELIGIONS,"
Qadian, Punjab, India.

